



## **HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

### **MEETING MINUTES**

#### **REGULAR MEETING**

**Monday August 26, 2013**

**5:30 – 8:00 pm in City Hall Council Chambers  
301 W. Second Street, Austin, TX 78701**

Chair Paul Rhea called the Commission Meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

#### **Commission Members in Attendance:**

Paul Rhea, Chair  
Elizabeth Brenner  
Sara Clark

Judy Cortez  
Jonathan Luu

#### **Human Resources Staff Present:**

Joya Hayes, Assistant Director, Human Resources  
Enrique Serrano, Senior Investigator, Equal Employment/Fair Housing Office (EE/FHO)  
Rose Xavier, EE/FHO Staff Liaison

### **1. CITIZENS' COMMUNICATION**

There were no citizens' communications.

### **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes from the July 22, 2013 regular meeting were approved on a 5-0 vote; Commissioner Cortez motion, Commissioner Brenner seconded. Commission members Lofton and Reynolds were absent.

### **3. OLD BUSINESS**

a. Presentation by Police Monitor Margo Frasier related to Austin Police Department (APD) policies, procedures and statistics concerning the City's African American Community. This is a continuation of the discussion related to two resolutions proposed at the July Human Rights Commission (HRC) meeting by Nelson Linder, President, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Austin Branch.

i. Office of the Police Monitor (OPM) takes and investigates complaints from the community about the behavior of sworn Austin Police Department (APD) officers. OPM oversees the entire investigative process of the complaint.

- ii. OPM also brings to the attention of the Police Chief and the City Manager patterns and trends at APD. OPM analyzes disparities in conduct to determine the causes.
  - iii. OPM can make recommendations on any case that has a disciplinary hearing.
- b. Discussion of possible recommendations to the City Council related to the presentation by Nelson Linder, President, NAACP, Austin Branch, and resolutions proposed by Mr. Linder related to economic disparities in Austin's African American Communities, Austin Police Department policies and programs that may disparately impact African Americans including use of force and deadly force policies, and additional oversight over the Austin Police Department by City Council.
  - i. Assistant Police Chief Troy Gay spoke about the training that is required of APD police officers. There is an eight month Police Academy, which includes instruction in the proper use of force, defensive tactics, etc. Additionally, officers have monthly continuing education on proper use of force. There is also regularly scheduled training on defensive tactics. Newly graduated officers are placed in on-the-job training, riding with an experienced officer for a minimum of 12 weeks.
  - ii. In 2008, the U.S. Department of Justice presented approximately 160 recommendations to APD, 80% of which were fully implemented. Only three of the 160 recommendations were not implemented.
- c. Staff recommendation to present a Facebook page proposal to the Public Information Office for review passed on a 5-0 vote; Commissioner Cortez motion, Commissioner Clark seconded. Commission members Lofton and Reynolds were absent.
- d. Proposal to reimburse Commissioner Cortez from the HRC budget to attend the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) 2013 Conference was withdrawn. Commissioner Cortez did not attend the conference as dues to IAOHRA were not paid in time to have voting rights.

#### **4. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Discussion relating to a possible conflict between the city code and state law regarding the number of votes needed for a city board or commission to take action on a business item. Item was tabled for a discussion at a later meeting as Commissioner Reynolds was absent.
- b. Discussion relating to Commissioner's participation and time commitments to Human Rights Commission.

## **5. STATUS OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

- a. The status of the Commission's goals and objectives for 2013.
  - i. It was proposed that new questions be constructed that would be more specific to speak with community groups. Commission members will brainstorm individually and next month bring new question to ask the community groups.

## **6. STAFF BRIEFING**

## **7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- a. Whether the Human Rights Commission should remain a member of IAOHRA or seek membership in other organizations.
  
- b. September meeting will allow for public comment on APD policies and programs that have a disparate impact on African Americans.

## **8. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Jonathan Luu was introduced as the newest confirmed member of the Human Rights Commission.

## **ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm without objection.